The New PARADISE OF GOD.

OR

The Regenerate, and his Fruit,

Set forth

In a SERMON to the *Hertfordshire*-Citizens at *Bow-Church* in Cheapside *London*, July 2. 1657. being the day of their publick *FESTIVAL.*

BY

ISAAC CRAVEN, Minister of the Gospel at *Aston* in *Hertfordshire.*

Cant. 4. 13.

Thy Plants are an Orchard of Pomegranats with pleasant fruits.

LONDON,

Printed for *J. Rothwell* at the Fountain in *Cheapside.* 1658.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

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Thy Plants are an Orchard of Pomegranats with pleasant fruits.

LONDON,

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TO MY
Honoured Friends and Countreymen of *Hertfordshire*, inhabiting or sojourning in the City of LONDON.

More particularly,

TO
THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL
Sir *Thomas Dacres*, Knight.
Edward Laurence, Esq. *John Jesson*, Esq.
Mr. *Francis Kirby*, Mr. *Blum Sadleir*.
Mr. *Henry Clarke*, Mr. *John Howland*.
Mr. *John Christian*, Mr. *Dudley Short*,
Mr. *William Brewer*, Mr. *Charles Read*, &
Mr. *Richard Weedon*.
The worthy Stewards of their late FESTIVAL.

Honoured Sirs,

AN inbred affection to my Native Countrie, *a civil respect to your Unanimous consent, may suffice to justifie the readiness of my complyance in undertaking this late service.*

Which having found the favour of your courteous acceptance, (atteſted by thoſe after-intreaties in order to a publication) inclines me to hope that the Doctrine then delivered will be drawn into ſome Uſe by Your care to practice it. I confeſſe my private genius ſtands little affected to the mode of appearing in print: Nor do I value my pains at ſo high a rate as to judge them worthy of the publick view. Howbeit, to compleat my reſpects to thoſe who imploy'd me, I have ſo far prevail'd againſt all reluctancies, as to gratifie Your deſires, though to my own diſſatisfaction. Beſeeching the Almighty to bleſſe the expence of that hour with ſucceſſe of eternity; That it may prove in the iſſue as profitable to Your ſouls, as it was judged ſuitable to the ſeaſon.

And now (dear Countrie-men) having met with ſo fair an opportunity, give me leave to remember You that this Your Countrie can contribute nothing of it ſelf to the illuſtration of Your perſons, (a) but waits to receive ſome rayes of ſplendour from the

a *Niſi per te fulſeris quid tibi lux patriæ præter tenebras allatura eſt?* Petrarch.

the reflections of your own worth. Be it therefore Your holy ambition so to excell in vertue and goodnesse, that as it was anciently foretold what should be said of Rahab *and* Babylon, (*b*) *&c.* [This man was born there,] *so it may reflect with honour upon the places of Your first breathing, that this and that* faithfull Christian was born there.

Nor will it a little advantage You to recount in Your meditations, how in the Land of Your first Nativity Ye did but begin Your Pilgrimage: Yea, the World it self is but the place of Your exile (c). *Heaven onely deserves to be esteemed Your Countrie* (d). *Let Your conversation therefore be in* Heaven. *And that You may speed in Your motions thither, save Your selves from this* untoward generation (*e*); Buy the truth, and sell it not (*f*); *Maintain* good works for necessary uses (*g*); *Follow after the things which* make for peace, *and wherewith Ye may* edifie one another (*h*).

To forbear any larger prefacing, and to give

b Psal. 87. 4.

c *Quid aliud terra quàm Exilium?* Calv.

d *Patriam nostram Paradisum computamus.* Cypr.

e Acts 2. 40.

f Pro. 23. 23

g Tit. 3. 14.

h Rom. 14. 19.

give You a summarie abridgement of all that I would say, [Whatsoever things are
Phil. 4.8. true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any vertue, and if there be any praise, think of these things.] *And accept the poor endeavours of*

Your humble and faithfull

Remembrancer,

Is. CRAVEN.

THE NEW PARADISE OF GOD.

OR,

The Regenerate and his Fruit.

PSAL. 1. 3.

And he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, which bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

THis Book of the *Psalms* is a little *Bible*, saith *Luther*; An *Epitome* (saith *Athanasius* of the whole *Scripture* (a); A *Compendium* (saith *Basil* of all *Divinity* (b). With such high *Encomiums* have divers *Expositors* diversly magnified it, none undeservedly. For as the Scriptures in general are able *to instruct*, to make a man wise unto salvation *c*. So the drift and scope of this in particular, is *to teach us the way to be truly blessed.*

a *Ep. ad Marcellin.*
b *In Psal. 1.*
c 2 Tim. 3. 15.

Insomuch as this first Psalm (which I take to be the Preface to all the rest) begins with blessedness; yea (by the word there used) a plurality of blessednesses, as the portion of the man that walketh uprightly. אשרי

A Psalm whose Author and occasion the Original hath not hinted; there being no Title prefixt for intimation of either. Indeed, the very notion of a *Preface* is enough to discover

discover the *occasion*. And being a precious piece of the *Divine Canon*, it must have the *Spirit of God* for its prime Author, by whose inspiration all Scripture is given d. And so a Psalm Title enough to our faith and obedience, though the Front of the Psalm be without a Title.

d 2 Tim. 3. 16.

Yet rather then it should absolutely passe without, *Athanasius* was pleased from the first word in the Greek, [μακάριος O blessed] to intitle the whole Psalm μακαριότης, or a Psalm of blessedness e. Not as if the proper business of it were to open the nature of blessedness; but because, having proposed it for our encouragement in the practice of true Religion f, it purposely describes and pourtrayes the person to whom it pertains. For to inform us whose portion it is, the Psalmist hath most exactly characterised him.

e Ep. ad Marcell.

f Ut humanam infirmitatem per spem beatitudinis ad innocens religionis studium hortaretur. Copen in Ps. 1. de Tit.

1. Negatively, or by what he abandons, *ver.* 1. *He walks not in the counsell of the ungodly, he stands not in the way of sinners, he sits not in the seat of the scornfull.* Neither is, nor does any of these.

2. Positively, or by what he takes pleasure in, *ver.* 2. *His delight is in the law of the Lord.* And this, not *dimidiatim*, with a halving partiality (like that counterfeit mother that would have the child divided; g) but in a blessed juncture of Theory and practice, of contemplation and conversation both. For first he delights in the speculative part, [*In his Law doth he meditate day and night.*] And then for the practick, [*He shall be like a tree planted by the Rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.*]

g 1 King. 3. 26.

It is the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in the volume of holy Writ, to illustrate heavenly truths by earthly resemblances, partly for their easier conveyance to our dark understandings, and partly for their deeper impression in our hearts and memories. And accordingly the words before us are a *Similitudinary description of a blessed man*; representing him,

1. In his Regeneration [*like a Tree planted.*]

2. In his accommodation [*by the rivers of waters.*]

3. And

3. And lastly, in his fructification [*that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.*]

So that (not to burden you with any secondary distribution) the regeneration of a sinner, the accommodation of the regenerate, and his answerable fructification, these (with Gods assistance) shall be the boundaries of this exercise. And first of the first particular in this description of a blessed man, as he is represented in his regeneration [*like a tree planted.*]

Not simply *sicut arbor*, like a tree; For a man, whether blessed or cursed, is capable of that resemblance, *Arbor inversa*, (as the Philosopher cals him) a tree with his root upwards, dilating and branching downwards; (insomuch as the dimmest sighted may say with him in the Gospel, *I see men walking like trees*) but *sicut arbor plantata* (there lies the discrimination) *like a tree that is planted.* And planted, not meerly externally, as a visible disposall in the Church, (within whose asspectable Territories many are called, few chosen *i*) but spiritually and mystically, by an invisible ingraftment into Christ. For otherwise, than which is born of the flesh, is flesh, saith our Saviour *k*. And not one (saith *Job*) that can bring a clean thing out of an unclean *l*. If *Adam*, if any of his off-spring beget a son, tis onely his own likeness *m*. Depraved nature cannot act beyond the sphere of its activity. The Gentiles before their calling, dead in trespasses and sins *n*. The Jews, before their believing, children of wrath even as others *o*. Yea, of the lawfull marriages of Gods own people, *Non generantur filii dei*, saith *Augustine*. There are not generated children of God, but of this world *p*. Which if the *Pelagians* oppose with his like from like, that learned Father is not behind for answer. The Saints (saith he) beget not after the Spirit of their *renascencie*, but after the flesh of their first Nativity *q*. To borrow his lively illustration, the son (ye know) of a circumcised *Israelite* was uncircumcised born *r*. Of the seed of a good Olive-tree comes nothing

b. Mar. 8. 24.

i. Mat. 20. 16.

k. Joh. 3. 6.

l. Job. 14. 4.

m. Gen. 5. 3.

n. Eph. 2. 1.

o. Eph. 2. 3.

p. Lib. 1. *de nupt. & conc.* cap. 17.

q. *Non gignunt secundum spiritum, per quem renati sunt, sed secundum carnem è qua nati sunt.*

r. Ser. 14. *de verb. Apost.*

but Oleaster, a wilde one *s*. So the faithfull spring not up naturally (as the Oake from an Acorn, or the Peach from a Stone) but by the gracious operation of a Divine hand. *Fiant* (saith *Tertullian*) *non nascimur Christiani* t. Or (as *Hierom*) *non nascimur, sed renascimur Christiani* u. True Christians are not such by their carnal birth, but as they are born again, and made members of Christ. Nothing to speake them blessed till they be implanted into Christ; for in him it is (and in no other name *w*) that all the Nations of the earth shall be blessed *x*.

And hence you may observe by the way, that this implantation is much different from those in our Hortyards, where Scions (commonly the better) correct the Stocks, & reduce them to their own nature. No such matter here: We work not an alteration in the Trunk or Stock; but are our selves transformed and renewed by it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.* Once unprofitable, now profitable *y*; once dead, now quickned *z*; once uncleans, and (with *Hierusalem*) in our blood *a*; now sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God *b*.

A Doctrine of such importance, as we may not dismiss it without a few deductions. For,

First, if the Christians plantation be by way of insition, and this insition so necessary in order to true fellicity; it naturally ensues, that a Right and Title to Heaven can never be grounded upon the Nobleness of a Carnal extraction, or the naturall qualities of Constitution, or the moral habit of Education. All these (though valuable in their kind) are too light in the ballance of the Sanctuary to demonstrate a blessed condition. Yea, although they should all be found to concenter in the same subject, yet, as it sometime faced with *Naaman* the *Syrian* [a great man with his Master; an honourable man, a mighty man in valour, *but a Leper* c] so, whether naturall abilities, or secular privileges, or moral qualifications,

s Ibid.
t Apost. cap. 17.
u Advers. Vigil.
w Act. 4. 12.
x Gen. 22. 18.
y Philem. v. 11.
z Eph. 2. 1.
a Ezek. 16. 6.
b 1 Cor. 6. 11.
c 2 Kings 5. 1.

tion, or their confluence in any one, the ſtate of irregeneracy diſtaynes them all.

Some indeed there have been, (and may be ſtill for ought I know) of a judgment extreamly favourable in behalf of heathen Moraliſts; as if the fruit of their fair deportment were no leſſe then the fruition of Heaven. But it muſt ſound very ſtrange in the eares of ſober Chriſtians, that ſuch Ethnicks ſhould be tranſplanted to heaven, as were never implanted into Chriſt; or live by viſion, who never lived by faith; or ſee Gods kingdom, who were never born again. Undoubtedly the trees of the Paradiſe of God are none but whom his own right hand hath planted; No *arbores ſylveſtres*, common trees to be found there. No inheritance in heaven, but for Sonnes of God *d*. No children of God, but by faith in Chriſt *e*. And ſuch faith, not of our ſelves (*Eph.* 2. 8.) *it is the gift of God*. Well may we admit of Natural Theologie *f*, but (as a grave judicious Writer) there's no Natural Chriſtianity *g*; ſeeing they that believe in Chriſt, are born not of blood [of the impure beginnings of their conception] nor of the will of the fleſh [by the power of Nature and Free-will] nor of the will of man, [by the prevalencie of a civill education] *but of God* h. And except a man be ſo born, by the ſpeciall vertue and work of the Spirit, he can neither *ſee* nor *enter* into the Kingdom of God *i*.

d Rom. 8. 17.
e Gal. 3. 26.
f Rom. 1. 19, 20.
g Dr. Reynolds in Pſal. 110. p. 201.
h Joſh. 1. 12, 13.
i Joh. 3. 3, 5.

Wherefore ſecondly, if the caſe ſtand thus, recount, I beſeech you, how neerly it concerns us to make this *ingrafture* and *implantation* ſure. Ἑαυτοὺς πειράζετε (in the words of the Apoſtle) *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the faith*. And having ſo done, over with it again, δοκιμάζετε, *prove your own ſelves. Know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates* k. It is altogether prepoſterous to conclude an intereſt to heaven, without aſſurance of this ſpiritual implantation. Aſſurance none without experience of a ſupernatural change. An eaſie matter to pretend to a

k 2 Cor. 13. 5.

communion with Christ, to a membership in his mystical body: but to prove it by grace for grace *l*, by a participation of the Divine nature *m*, by the indument of the New man *n*, *hic labor, hoc opus est*. O man, whosoever thou art that livest in the service of sin, that drinkest iniquity like water, & walkest after the course of this world, fulfilling the base desires of the flesh, and of the mind, its an evidence against thee (notwithstanding all thy confidence) that thou hast not partaken of the root or of the fatnesse of the Olive-tree, but art hitherto Christlesse, by that Apostolick maxime, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his* o. And so (with *Pauls Ephesians*, while unconverted) destitute of Christ, and of hope together *p*.

l. Joh. 1. 16.
m. 2 Pet. 1. 4.
n. Col. 3. 10.
o. Rom. 8. 9.
p. Eph. 2. 12.

Whereas (contrarily) if any through the Spirit doe mortifie the deeds of the body *q*, if they purifie themselves even as Christ is pure *r*; if they yield their members as instruments of righteousnesse unto God *s*, these need not say, *Who shall ascend into Heaven?* or, *who shall descend into the deep?* For they bear in their own heart a Testimonial of their Regeneration, and may resolve upon a right unto the Tree of life, with a priviledge to enter in through the gates into the City *t*. Only,

q. Rom. 8. 13.
r. 1 Joh 3. 3.
s. Rom. 6. 13.
t. Rev. 22. 14.

In the last place, upon sence of this blessed ingrafture, great reason trees of righteousnes should acknowledge the hand that planted them *u*, rejoyce in him that made them. *That they enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his Courts with praise* w. For in this great work of Regeneration it is the Lord that hath made us, and not we our selves *x*. It is the Father that hath planted us, and not we our selves. He is ὁ γεωργὸς, the Husbandman; we onely γεώργιον, his husbandry *z*, and should therefore shew forth the vertues the praises of him who hath called us to glory and vertue; saying, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us*, [not to the power of nature, or to arbitrary choice] *but unto thy Name give thou the glory* a. If *Plato* could be thankfull for being a *Grecian*, not a

u. Is. 61. 3.
cap. 43. 21.
w. Ps. 100. 4.
x. Ps. 100. 3.
y. Joh. 15. 1.
z. 1 Cor. 3. 9.
a. Psal. 115. 1.

Barbarian, an *Athenian* among *Grecians*, a Philosopher among *Athenians*; much rather should the faithfull for that they are born of God *b*, and made partakers of his Son *c*. Especially seeing first before their ingrafture, he found them in no better a condition then the rest of the world; all wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked. *d* Nor could any thing difference them save his own discriminating grace, *e*. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight, *f*.

b. 1 *Joh.* 5. 1.
c. Heb. 3. 14.
d. Rev. 3. 17.
e. Sola gratia redemptos discernit a perditis. Aug. in Enchir.
f. Mat. 11. 26.

Secondly, and in the thoughts of his goodness towards them, he had respect to their disposal, as well as ingrafture, tendred their accommodation as well as planting. For that's our next particular in this description of a blessed man, as he is represented in his accommodation, [planted by the rivers of water.]

A situation (by general consent) of choycest meetness for fruit-bearing trees, that time after time, however the season fall out, they may have the benefit of water to make them fruitful. And accordingly wise King Solomon (who thought it no disparagement to be seen in husbandry) made pools of water, (*Eccles.* 2. 6.) to water the wood that bringeth forth trees. Yea, 'tis observed to be their usual course in such hot Countreys to plant their gardens neer Well-springs of water, and to derive many rivulets upon the roots of the trees for their constant moystening and refreshing, *g*.

g. Aynsworth on Ps. 1. 3.

Now allusions hereunto are not unfrequent in holy Scripture, for expression of supplies both secular and sacred. As namely where it compares the proud *Assyrian* to a tall Cedar with fair branches, whom the waters made great, and the deep set him up on high, *h*. As also unthankful *Hierusalem* to a Spreading Vine planted by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and bear fruit, *i*. And to intimate the same accommodations intended in my Text, it assimilates the sincere believer to a tree planted by the water, that spreads out her roots by the rivers *k*.

h. Ezek. 31. 3, 4.
i. Ezek. 17. 8.
k. Jer. 17. 7, 8.

So that this commodious situation of trees, is a notable illustration of God's care over his people; by whose fatherly providence it is, that they are graciously accommodated, supplied, and succoured with all things appertayning to life and godliness. As namely

2 Pet. 1. 3.

1. Externally, with the administration of the Word and Sacraments, which are as rivers of water to the thirsty soul, and (like the streams of *Kidron*) make glad the City of God, *m*. For (as the Lord in the second of *Micah*) *do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* Yea, *the Statutes of the Lord rejoyce the heart*, Psal. 19. 8. *And from the consolation of the Scriptures ariseth our hope*, Rom. 15. 4. *They are comforts in affliction*, n *reliefs in temptation*, o *meanes of a spiritual thriving and fructifying in Gods Garden*. p.

m Psal. 46. 4.

n Psal. 119. 50.
o Ps. 73. 16. 17.
p 1 Pet. 2. 2.

Much rather as they are seconded with those visible words *q*, *the seals of the righteousnes of faith* r, those blessed cherishers and fosterers of Gods Plantation. For although their instrumentality be Moral, not Phisical, in the conveyance and exhibition of grace, yet being of divine appointment and the ministration of the Spirit, they are (*like the Oath of God annexed to his Counsel* s) means of strong consolation to them that believe. For to the end they may take effect, the faithful (besides these outward Well-springs) are accommodated in the 2. place internally, with the soveraign influences and irrigations of Christ his Spirit. By whose gracious inhabitancy in their souls, he becomes unto them a Fountain of Gardens, (*Cant.* 4. 15.) a well of water, and streams from *Lebanon*. So that God having once convey'd the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, they have a pledge of his presence to comfort them in their pilgrimage, a witness of their adoption to help their infirmities, a guide of their life to keep them from falling, a faithful remembrancer to prompt them to duty, a seal of their redemption, an earnest of their salvation, till they behold in glory what they believe in grace.

q *Quid sunt aliud corporalia Sacramenta, quam quaedam quasi verba visibilia? Aug.*
r *Rom* 4. 11. *Heb.* 6. 17, 18.

A felicity not conceivable by the children of this world; for did they truly apprehend, and rightly value it, they would be more in their desires and motions towards it. *If thou knewest the gift of God* (said our Saviour to the woman of *Samaria*) *and who it is that saith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.* t. But, poor sinful creature! she knew it not. Nor was it her case alone; 1 Cor. 2. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. *Balaam* indeed had a kind of glympse of it in the 24. of *Numbers*, How goodly (saith he) are thy Tents, O *Jacob*, and thy Tabernacles, O *Israel*! As gardens by the river side, as the trees of Ligh-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar-trees beside the waters. Yea, but the knowledge he professeth hereof, was not by faiths apprehension, or upon personal experience, or with a cordial valuation; only by the vision of the Almighty. u. Where as the knowledge which the faithful have, is judicial, experimental, appretiative, delightful. They speak, but first they have believed; *Psal.* 116. 10. I believed, therefore have I spoken. They see, but first they have tasted, w. *Psal.* 34. 8. Taste and see that the Lord is gracious. And then for appretiation and delight, O how great is the goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! x. How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! y. A day in thy Courts is better then a thousand, z. Blessed is the man whom thou chooses and causest to approach into thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy Temple. a.

t *John.* 4. 10.

u *Num.* 24. 16.

w *Ejus dulcedinem non cognoscitis, quia minime degustatis. Greg.*

x *Psal.* 31. 19.

y *Psal.* 84. 1.

z *ver.* 10.

a *Psal.* 65. 4.

The consideration whereof may serve in the first place to depreciate the adored excellencies and perfections of this world; and to take off our spirits from discontentive emulation at the sight of prosperous sinners. For alas! in the greatest fulness of their external accommodations,

dations, in the height of their glory, and the exquisitenesse of their delights, yet for lack of these rivers of water they are but a drie ignoble generation; not worthy to be compared with the plants of Christ, even in the worst of their outward condition. For as he in *Plutarch* said of the *Scythians*, that although they had not Musick nor Vines among them, yet they had gods, *b.* So the Regenerate in their greatest want of outward supplies, yet so long as they have the Spirit of God, and their situation by these still waters *c*, they are not destitute of true felicity. Yea, by the benefit of those holy streams, they are happy in the exercise, happy in the increase, in the assurance and continuance of received graces. In the due valuation whereof, the treasures of *Egypt* were but trash to *Moses d*; the priviledges of a Jew, but dung to St. *Paul e*; the Tents of *Kedar* but a prison to *David f*; *I had rather* (saith he) *be a door-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the Tents of wickednesse g.* And accordingly the Emperour *Theodosius* rejoyced more in his Ecclesiastical membership, then in all his Imperial Majesty.

b. Plutarch. συμπόσ. ἑπτὰ σοφῶν.

c. Ps.23.2.

d. Heb. 11. 26.

e. Phil.3.8.

f. Ps.120.5.

g. Ps.84.10.

Wherefore 2. say now, ye that are planted in the house of the Lord, is it not good being here? to keep close to him that hath thus disposed us and tendred our spiritual accommodation? O let it engage us, and strengthen our resolutions to persevere in the faith of Jesus Christ. Remember the trees in *Jotham's* parable *h*, which being severally courted with the proffer of a Kingdom, should I (saith the Olive-tree) leave my fatnesse? Should I (saith the Fig-tree) forsake my sweetnesse? Should I (saith the Vine) leave my Wine? So against all the allurements and temptations of the world, should we forsake these rivers of living water, these peerlesse priviledges for the momentany pleasures of sin? No, take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God *i*; Lord (saith *Peter*) to whom shall we go? Thou hast the

h. Jud.9. 8. &c.

i. Heb.3. 12.

words

words of eternal life k. *I will dwell* (saith *David*) *in the house of the Lord for ever* l. And, *Let their money perish with them* (said that noble Marquesse of *Vico*) *that esteem all the gold in the world worth one dayes society with Jesus Christ and his holy Spirit.*

k *John* 6.68.
l *Psal.* 23.6.
m *In vit. Galeac. Caracc.*

Now in the sense of this blessed accommodation, what remains but that we return those Rivers to their *Ocean*, and improve them to answerable *Fruit*? Who plants a Vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof n? And that's our last particular in this description of a blessed man, as he is represented in his *fructification*, [*that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.*]

n *Sua reddantur origini fluenta gratiæ. Bern.*
o 1 *Cor.* 9.7.

Which words, although in a Grammatical Consideration, they relate to the *Tree*, yet *intentionally* to the Regetate, compared to it. And they lie to be taken up in a four-fold gradation.

He bringeth forth } His fruit
Bringeth forth fruit } In his Season.

1. *Edit*, He bringeth forth] is not meerly for *receiving*, but as well for *yielding*; not barely for taking *in*, but joyntly for giving *forth*; for the *actus elicitus* [believing with the heart] and for the *actus imperatus* [confessing with the mouth p]. For receiving by *Faith* of Christ's fulness, and for discharging by *Love* to Christ's glory; that as out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh q, so the sap of infused grace will soon finde vent for its own disclosure. In the place before alledged [*I believed, therefore have I spoken*] And in 2 *Cor.* 4. *We also believe, and therefore speak*. Howbeit, whereas verbal profession is but the leaf of the tree, the honest sincere Christian determines not his faith in leaves, stopps not there, but,

p *Rom.* 10. 10.
q *Mat.* 12. 34.

2. *Edit fructum*, He bringeth forth fruit] renders his faith *visible*, by the adjuncture of *New Obedience*; his profession *honourable* by translating the form into *Power*; his

his graces *observable* by drawing them out into *Works*: As his faith into the *work* of faith; his love into the *labour* of love; his hope into the *patience* of hope, 1 *Thess.* 1. That as *Jacob* allegorically prophecieth of *Joseph* [*a fruitful bough by a Well*] Gen. 49.22. So it is the prayer and care of an Israelite indeed that (in some correspondencie to his gracious supplies) he may be filled with the fruits of righteousnesse, r and fruitful in every good work s. Agreeably to that of our Saviour, *He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit* t.

r Phil. 1.11.
s Col. 1.10.
t John 15 1.

And surely, all things considered, great reason he should. It is the object of divine expectation, *Isa.* 5.7. He looks for [the grapes of] righteousnesse. It is the end of our Saviour's passion, *Tit.* 2.14. that we should be zealous of good works. The purpose of our *Implantation*, Eph. 2.10. *Created unto Christ Jesus unto good works.* The intent of our spiritual marriage, *Rom.* 7.4. that we should bring forth fruit unto God. The drift of divine forbearance, *Mat.* 3.8. that whereas the wrath of God is *ira venturi*, a wrath to come, and the axe but laid to the root of the trees, we therefore bring forth fruits meet for repentance. So that, take away fruit, and you crosse them all; God's patient expectation; Christ's death and passion; our marriage and implantation: These can never be adjusted with mere leaves. It is not *Lord, Lord*, or *The Temple of the Lord*, or a parcel of specious words, or a Baptismal initiation, or a formal frequenting Gods house, or an eating & drinking in Christ's presence, that can evidence our part in these in the words of a holy Martyr u, *Vidi opera bona non apparent, ad extra, ibi fides non est ad intra.* The root of faith can have no existence in our hearts, if the fruit of it be to seek in our lives. If your lives be unprofitable under the *name* of *Christians*; your conversation fruitlesse under the *leaves* of *profession*; such sig-lesse Fig-trees doe but cumber the ground, and can look for nothing but the

u John Huss.

axe

axe and the fire *w*: the one for their sudden excision the other for their endless burning.

To prevent such a woful issue, add to your leaves *Fruit*, to your faith *Vertue* *x*; and endeavour (as those ancient Christians) *Non grandia loqui, sed vipere*. To be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own soules *z*. *De virtute loqui minimum est*. *a* The easiest thing of an hundred to talk of Christianity, to discourse of Religion, to hear Christ's Ministers, to give applause to their labours. *Hæc sunt folia* (saith *Aug.*) *modo fructus quæritur*. These are leaves indeed, but the fruit is all. *Herein* (saith Christ) *is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit*, John 15.8. And such only shall at last be glorified of him, *Rom.* 2.10. Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good. For as Fathers observe of the trees used about the building of the Temple, that neither post, nor spar, nor so much as a pin, but was made of the wood of some fruit-bearing tree *b*: So none to have place in that eternal palace of glory, but fruit-bearing Christians, abounding in the work of the Lord. For (by the verdict of the Text) he only is the blessed man that brings forth fruit.

Where (to look more narrowly into the Metaphor) his very observable, that in doing the works of Righteousnesse,

1. *Profert, non simulat*; He vitally beares it, not deceitfully counterfeits it. The works of his profession are not fruits artificially sembled, but naturally yielded; not like *Zeuxes* his painted grapes which deceived the birds, nor like *Dædalus* his αὐτοκίνητα, which had almost deceived men; nor like *Pygmalion's* Statue, on which himself became enamoured; but the genuine and unfeigned products of sanctifying grace; ἀγάπη ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας, 1 *Tim.* 1.5. out of pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

2. And in working Righteousnesse, *profert, non cogitur*; He acts not upon compulsion, but of a gracious prompt-

w *Arbor infructuosa, quæ non nisi terram occupat, duo tantum expectare potest, securim scilicet & ignem.* Bern.

x 2 *Pet.* 1.5.

y *Minut. Felix in Octav.*

z *Jam.* 1.22.

a *Pers.*

b *Bishop Andrewes of the Nativ. Ser.* 10.

promptneſſe and inclination; takes not up duties as tireſome burthens, but loves and likes them as refreſhing exerciſes. Indeed, *Virtus nolentium nulla eſt*, ſaith the Moraliſt; To doe good againſt thy will, is (in effect) to doe ill. The ſervice thou doſt unchearfully, *Fit de te magis quàm facis*, ſaith *Proſper*; 'Tis rather extorted from thee, then performed by thee. The bleſſed man is of another Spirit; not hal'd *ab extrinſeco*, by the violence of ſome compulſory Agent; but ſweetly diſpoſed by an inward principle of grace, drawn with the cords of love, acted and promoted by a ſpirit of ingenuity, 2 *Cor.* 3. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. This then for bringing forth, and for bringing forth fruit, our two firſt gradations.

3. *Fructum ſuum*, He bringeth forth his fruit. And his fruit (if we conſult the Apoſtle) is the fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5.22. Such as love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſſe, goodneſſe, faith, meekneſſe, temperance; to cruciſie the fleſh with the affections and luſts *c*; to do juſtly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God *d*. The fruit of the ſpirit then, is the proper fruit of elect regenerate.

c Gal. 5.24.
d Mic. 6,8.

Where haply ſome may ſay, How can theſe ſeveral Intereſts accord? If theſe and the like be the fruits of God's Spirit, how are they ours? Muſt ſtakes be parted between God and our ſelves? I anſwer, Upon due conſideration, here is no Inconſiſtencie, no claſhing of Titles at all. No prejudice to Gods Intereſt in aſſuming the fruit to be ours. It is Gods fruit, *ratione præcepti*, as in his word he requires it.
Our fruit, *ratione Officii*, as we are bound to bear it.
Gods fruit, *efficienter*, as he gives vertue to yield it.
Our fruit, *ſubjectivè*, *e* and as he graciouſly imputes it.
Gods fruit, in the ultimate end, as it makes for his glory.
Our fruit, in the ſubordinate end, as it conduceth to our benefit.

e Ut totum in illo [*libero arbitrio*] ſic totum ex illa, [*gratia ſcilicet divina.*] *Bern. de grat. & lib. arbit.*

So far from prejudicing the Divine Intereſs, that indeed the Lord will not own the fruit for his (ſo as to count it

for

for righteousnesse to thee) except it be *fructus tuus*, truly thine; Thine, for personality, of thine own bearing; and thine, for correspondencie, of answerable kinde.

1. It imports a Personality [He brings forth his own fruit] relies not upon the vertues and fruits of others. Such a lazie dependence can be of no avail for the assecuration of true happinesse. *The just man* (saith the Prophet) *shall live by his own faith* e. *And every man* (saith the Apostle) *shall bear his own burthen* g. Insomuch as though *Noah* [a Preacher of Righteousnesse h] *Daniel* [a man greatly beloved i] *Job* [so eminent in righteousnesse and the fear of God k] though these three men were alive upon the earth, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousnesse l. Well may the good lives and deeds of others be matter for thy imitation, or a relief to thy necessities; they cannot answer for thy sinful security. Though born of Religious Parents, disposed in a Religious Familie, seated under a Religious Pastor, of acquaintance with religious People, all this will not serve to excuse thy barren profession: No, the righteousnesse of the righteous shall be upon him; and the wickednesse of the wicked shall be upon him n; and the righteous Judge give every man according to the fruit of his own doings o.

Presume not then, with those foolish Virgins, upon the oyl in others vessels p. *Think not* (saith the Baptist) *to say within your selves, We have Abraham to our Father* q. It was but a sorry commendation of *Lewis* the Eighth of *France*, that he was son to an excellent Father, and Father to an excellent son r. *Nam quæ non fecimus ipsi, vix ea nostra voco* s. *Those things which ye have heard and seen in me, do*, saith the Apostle, *Phil.* 4.9. So the laudable things of others, do in your own persons, and call them not yours, till ye exemplifie them in your practise. For that's the first importment of [*Fructum fuum*] a personal fructification [He brings forth his own fruit.]

e *Hab.* 2. 4.
f *Gal.* 6. 5.
g 2 *Pet.* 2. 5.
h *Dan.* 10. 19.
i *Job* 1. 1.
k *Ezek.* 14. 14.
l Non possunt in die judicii aliorum virtutes aliorum vitia sublevare. *Hier.*
m *Ezek.* 18. 20.
n *Jer.* 17. 10.
o *Mat.* 25. 8.
p *Mat.* 3. 9.
q *Isaacsons Chron. ad an.* 1223.
r *Ovid.*

2. It

2. It imports a genuine correspondencie [his fruit] that is, *secundum speciem suam*, according to his kinde. That as the Earth was appointed to bring forth the Fruit-trees yielding fruit after his kinde t: So a good man, *out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things*, saith our Saviour u. And the wisedom that is from above, is full of mercy and good fruits w.

t Gen. 1. ii.

u Mat. 12. 35.

w Jam. 3. 17.

'Tis true, the choisest Saints upon Earth have their stylings, their failings. In many things we offend all x. Nor a just man upon Earth that doth good and sinneth not y. Nor from the first transgression of the first man, can it be said of any save Him who is God and Man, *non fuit peccatum*, he knew no sin. Howbeit the sincere Believer is in a different habitude to the products of Corruption, and the proper fruits of Regeneration. Consider him according to the New Creature, or as he is born of God, 'tis plain upon the Tables, 1 *John* 2. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. Non facit peccatum, quia patitur potius*, saith *Bernard* z. He is rather passive then active in the businesse of sin. He acknowledgeth to his grief *peccatum inhabitans*, the sin that dwelleth in him a, but he cannot own the works thereof as his genuine and proper fruit b. No, that's of another nature, *Rom.* 7. 25. [*I my self* (saith the Apostle) *serve the Law of God*.] That's Repentance, and Mortification, and Newnesse of life, *Rom.* 6. That's vertue, and temperance, and patience, and godlinesse, and brotherly kindnesse, and charity, 2 *Pet.* 1. And these, not after the rigour of the Law, in the perfect performance of duty, but in the truth and sincerity of a Christians desires, in the uprightnesse and integrity of his will and purpose, in his careful pursuances and daily endeavors after all goodnesse, and righteousnesse, and truth. For in these consists the fruit of the Spirit, *Eph.* 5. 9. And in the practice of a found Believer, these only appertain to [*Fructum suum*] to his suitable and proper fruit. He is born of the Spirit, and (to answer his spi-

x Jam. 3. 2.

y Eccl. 7. 20.

z De nat. & dignit. Divin. amoris cap. 6.

a Rom. 7. 17, 24

b Rom. 7. 15, 17.

ritual

ritual birth) is careful to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Now the due consideration hereof, as it should humble the holiest in the consciousnesse of whatsoever unkindlike and unanswerable fruit, work them to a self-confusion for the surreptitious inordinancies of the Old Man, continue them in a stedfast reliance upon the righteousnesse of the Tree of Life: So it may serve to arm them against the proposals of the World, and provoke them to an Examination and Trial of their fruit. For

1. Whereas the World would alienate us from the vertues and life of God, and would gain our consent to bring forth heterogeneous fruit c (lust of the eye alledging, It will be for your Profit; lust of the flesh suggesting, It will be for your Pleasure; pride of life pretending, It will be for your Advancement) the truly regenerate Soul may hence be sufficiently furnished and prompted to answer [That great God, whose I am by his grace, and whom I serve with my Spirit, hath not been as a Wilderdesse or barren heath unto me; but having mercifully chosen me out of the Commons of the World, he hath planted me in his inclosed Garden, ingraffed me) into a Noble Stock, supplied me with Rivers of Living Water. And is it equitable, after all this, to yield him no better fruit? Is this correspondent to the nature of so high a Calling? Is it *Fructus meus*, a kindlike fruit, consentaneous to a spiritual state? As *Nehemiah* d, *Should such a man as I flee?* No, the time past of my life may suffice me to have wrought the will of the Gentiles e, to have brought forth *lai nuscas*, soure grapes, those wilde fruits of the Old Man. *Hac vita, alios mores postulat.* It must be otherwise now that I am planted in the house of the Lord.] In the words of *Leo*, f *Agnosce, O Christiane, dignitatem tuam, &c.* Acknowledge, O Christian, thine own dignity, and being made partaker of the Divine Nature, return not into thy former

c *Qui genitoris opera non facit, negat genus.* Chrysol. *Ser.* 123.

d Neh. 6. 11.

e Rev. 1. 3.

f *Serm.* 1. *in Nativ. Dom.*

mer vilenesse by a degenerate conversation. But then,

In the second place, whereas there may be much mistaking in the account of kindlike fruit (a way that may seem right unto a man, when the end is the wayes of death g.) It therefore neerly concernes us to search and try our wayes h, and every man to prove his own work i. For the fruit which thou mayst think to be right, say it be of likely appearance, yet if destitute of divine allowance (either expresse, or by derivation) what can it be deemed but either the fruit of an ignorant phantasie, or an arrogant superstitious vanity? And thy greatest diligence in bringing it forth, only χρόνου παραναλωμα a laborious losse of time. Again, admit it be of Gods commanding, yet if it arise not from a Supernatural root, from a Principle of special grace, from faith working by love, it must either be violently forced, or hypocritically feigned, and so of no acceptation with God, *Heb.* 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God. Laudo fructum boni operis, sed in fide agnosco radicem,* faith *Austin* k. I shall ever commend the fruit of a good work, but faith must be the root to make it good. Lastly, if not rightly Scoped with respect to the glory of God, and to approvable Subordinate ends (for in divine morality 'tis the rectitude of the ayme, not the substance of the act that carries it with God. l) Such sinisterly intended fruit is no better then the apples of *Sodom*, or the grapes of *Gomorrah*, or the fruit of degenerate *Israel* [fruit unto himselfe, m] neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to the bearer.

Whereas (contrarily) if we work by rule, the undefiled Law of God; if we live by faith in the merits and strength of Christ; if we act sincerely, with intention of our Masters honour, there can be no clearer evidence of a reasonable and spiritual service; provided that it be performed *in tempore suo*, in its proper Season. Which is

g *Pro.* 16. 25.
h *Lam.* 3. 40.
i *Gal.* 6. 40.

k *In Psal.* 31.

l *Non actibus, sed finibus pensantur officia.* Aug.
m *Hos.* 10. 1. Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself.

is our last gradation observable in the Text, his fruit [in his season.]

In his season? When is that? Is the doing of good at any time unseasonable? Are we not all our time to continue in the service of God? True, for the general we are (that's without controversie) and as never to give over the care of well-doing; so to fasten upon it while it is called to day *n*; not baulking the present season with presumption upon an uncertain hereafter; not proroguing the practice of Christianity to the bed of infirmness aud languishing, with purpose then to distribute, when thou mayst keep thy wealth no longer; to cease from sinful pleasures when strength of pursuance fails thee (a time ill chosen for repentance, when, with *Issachar*, thou must couch between two burthens, the burthen of sin and sicknesse) No, that's only to be reckoned our day and our season, wherein God requires and expects our fruit. And that's now (saith our Saviour, *Joh.* 5.25.) ὥρα νῦν ἐστι. *The hour is now.* Behold, *Now is the accepted time*; Behold, *Now is the day of salvation*, 2 *Cor.* 6.2. And (clearly) it is the deplorable misery of all deferrers, the hopes of grace to come make them gracelesse for the present; and thoughts of what they will be regardlesse of what they should be. 'Tis true, the mercies of God are great, and to be admired; but his judgments are just, and to be feared. And though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true *o*.

n *Psal.* 95.7.8.

o *In morte pœnitentia est sera & coacta, ideoq; raro vera, seria & sincera. Corn. a Lap. in Luc.* 12.

The Crab in the Fable, having wounded the Serpent to death, in recompence of his crooked life, and at last perceiving him to streak out himself; *At oportuit sic vixisse* (saith he) It is too late now, thou shouldst have lived so. Ye may easily add the Moral. *Væ illis* (saith St. *Ambrose*) *qui tunc habuerunt terminum luxuriæ, cum vitæ.* Woful is the cae of those procra-

 stinating

finating sinners, whose lives and lusts have their ends together.

Wherefore, knowing the dreadful consequents of neglected time, say, I beseech you every one in the secret of his own soul, [If I must once reform, and break off my sins; if I must bring forth fruits meet for repentance, why not to day? p Why should I neglect the time of my visitation, and harden my heart by these needless delayes? Why should I boast my self of to morrow, not knowing what a day may bring forth?]

p *Quamdiu cras, cras? Quare non modo? Quare non hac hora finis turpitudinis meæ.* Aug.

When a certain City in *Asia* had promised King *Alexander* the great a part of their Lands, and the half of all their goods: No (saith he) I am not come into *Asia* to accept of what ye shall shoot me, but that your selves should take what I chance to leave q. So it were high presumption in us, should we treat in like sort with God, who hath all our times in his own power. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, by that old rule in Law: So neither youth nor age can escape from the service of God. He is *Alpha* and *Omega* s, the first & the last t, and we, from first to last to order our lives in his fear. Thus, in a general consideration, even all our time is the Season for bringing forth fruit.

q Sen. Epist. Lib. 7. Ep. 54.

s Rev. 1.8.
t Rev. 2.8.

But then if we descend to particularities, and consider them in their due circumstantials, this seems to be the Psalmists meaning here, That it is the property of a blessed man to be watchful in espying, and wise in observing [τὸν τε, καὶ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον] as the matter and substance of a particular duty, so the proper Season wherein to do it. Which (for more distinct apprehension) ye may please to take up in a three-fold expression.

1. In his Season] that is, in due place and order, upon requisite and proper Antecedents. The non-

observation

observation whereof is enough to deprave a pretended service, so far as to deprive it of divine acceptance. See it in some particulars. To preach the Gospel of Christ, to hear the Word of Truth, to shew the Lords death in the Eucharist, to administer Pastoral Consolation: These, and the like, are works of great importance. But then so to preach, as without commission; so to hear, as without resolution; so to communicate, as without preparation; so to comfort, as without tokens of contrition: Such preposterous acts as these, are over-hasty for hope of speed; good in themselves, but (as *Hushai* of *Achitophel's* counsel a) not good *hac vice*, at such a time; not countable for good to the Agent, for lack of requisite Antecedents, 2 Chr. 14.13. *The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.* Thus the first Expression.

a 2 Sam. 17.7.

2. In his Season] that is, answerably and suitably to whatsoever condition. For as this present life is subject to variety of changes; so the faithful in Christ are endued with variety of graces; and (like that Tree of life in the last of the *Revel.*) inabled to bear all manner of fruit, and to yield their fruit every moneth. As

In the moneth of Abundance, compassionate beneficence.
In the moneth of Poverty, submissive contentation.
In the moneth of Health, industrious cheerfulness.
In the moneth of Sickness, religious patience.
In the moneth of Honour, the fruit of noble Atchievments.
In the moneth of Dishonour, the fruit of a meek spirit.
In the day of Prosperity, thankfully rejoycing.
In the day of Adversity, wisely considering. * Eccl. 7.14.

Insomuch as a right-bred Christian can alledge no

causes, either from his present condition, to take himself off from duty, or to perplex his soul with thoughts of after-changes. Seeing however it fare with him, it is his season to fructifie; and whatever may befall him, he hath a sap of suitable grace to bring forth in every season.

3. And lastly, In his Season] that is, *accepta quæque ansa*, taking hold on every time and opportunity of doing good. Indeed, every time is not meet for every purpose; and consequently every work not to be done at random in every time. *Is this a time* (said the Prophet to his servant) *to receive money, and to receive garments?* w *Should I weep* (said the Jew) *in the fifth month?* x That is, in which the Temple was finished. *In Saul's* absence no season for *Saul* to offer sacrifice. y While *David* was over-powered, no season for *Joab* to be charged with delinquencie z. Till the wine was gone out, no season for *Nabal* to be reminded of his folly a. To every thing there is a season, saith the Preacher, *Eccles.* 3. And great difference (say the Criticks) between καιρὸς and χρόνος, Time and Season. Καιρὸς ἐστὶν ὥρα. Opportunity is the flower of time; and a well-chosen season the greatest advantage of any action b.

Like the golden Scepter held forth to Queen *Esther* c.
Like one days Sun-shine in catching weather d.
Like those troubled waters to the neerest expectant d, and
Like the valley of *Achor* for a door of hope e.

The more to be lamented in the carelesness of most Christians, that make so little use of many precious opportunities of doing or receiving good. To whom may be justly accommodated that saying of *Elihu*, *God speaks once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not* f. For the voice of the Lord is not only in the words of his Law, or in the motions of his Spirit, or in the largesses.

w 2 Kin. 5.26.
x Ezr. 3.3.
y 1 Sam. 13. 12, 13.
z 2 Sam. 3.13.
a 1 Sam. 25.37.
b Bishop Hall in his Contempl. lib. 21. on Haman, &c.
c Esth. 5.2.
d John 5.4.
e Hos. 2.15.
f Job 33.14.

gesses of his goodnesse, or in the rod of his displeasure, but in those golden opportunities, in that price which he puts into mens hands; and yet *desit animus*, few have any heart to improve them. Wise enough to take notice of natural Seasons, to discern the face of the Sky; while (with those Jewes) they care not to know τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον g, regard not the offerture of seasonable hints for the exercise of Christian vertue, and the furthering of their accompts with God. And hence it comes to passe, that as *Ahab* lost himself by letting *Benhadad* go out of his hands h, as *Felix* was most unhappy in putting off *Paul* to another time i: So by reason of this non-advertency, this regardlesnes of time and judgment, the misery of man is great upon him k, while he neglects those *mollia tempora*, desirable seasons for spiritual advantages, which may (haply) in all his remainder never come about again.

g *Luke* 12. 56.

h 1 *Kin.* 20. 42.

i *Acts* 24. 25.

k *Eccl.* 8. 6.

Wherefore, Brethren, to prevent this misery, let it be our wisedom and care, in our several capacities, for the glory of God, for the behoof of our souls, to beautifie our services with suitable seasons; and (as the Lord in his providence shall hold them forth) to improve them in the discharge of Christian duty.

It may be thou hast a season for some act of piety, an opportunity for prayer, for praises, for mourning, for rejoycing, for appearing in the cause of God.

Or a season for brotherly-kindnesse, an opportunity for admonition, exhortation, consolation, counsel, distribution to the necessities of the Saints.

Or a season for neighbourly charity, an opportunity to compose differences, to relieve the oppressed, to help the fatherlesse and widow, to consider the poor and needy. O the preciousnesse of such seasons, the happinesse of such souls as have grace to use them! For although in their natural account they

they be but particles and minutes, yet in their spiritual and prudential managing, the very quintessence of time, and the apparatus to eternity. O Season! Thou art in this like the City of God, *Psal.* 87. 3. *Glorious things are spoken of thee.* A word spoken in season (as a work performed in season) *is like apples of*
¶ Pro. 25. 11. *gold in pictures of silver* ¶. [Like apples of gold] such is the preciousness, [in pictures of silver] such the lustre, the grace and beauty of fruit in season.

Unseasonable therefore to end here, without a word or two for this Season, which calls upon you (my honoured and beloved Countrymen) in expectation of some fruit of this your Brotherly meeting. To which purpose I shall take my liberty from the resemblance in the Text, to look upon you as so many Trees, whom the wise Moderator of all things hath (at times) transposed from the soyl of your Nativity, that
m Psal. 107. 7. ye might go to a City of habitation *m*; ingrafted you into the stock of an honourable Metropolis, disposed you by the rivers and springs of water, blessed you with the upper-springs [the means of grace] blessed you with the nether-springs [the accommodations of this life] and graciously reserved you to the solemnity of this day, wherein to record his mercies towards you.

And now, that this great Benefactor hath done all this for you, What more seasonable then to renew your wonted consultations in order to some thankful return? To say among your selves in the sense and valuation of his favours, What is to be done for God? For God? yea but (as *Elipbaz* answered *Job*) *Can a*
n Job 22. 2. *man be profitable unto God* n? *The earth is the Lords,*
o Psal 24. 1. *and the fulnesse thereof* o. *Every beast of the forrest is*
p Psal. 50. 10. *his, and the cattel upon a thousand hills* p. My [illegible]dnesse
q Psal. 16. 2. (saith *David*) *extends not to thee* q. Or (as the vulgar Translation hath it) *Bonorum meorum non eges.*

Thou

Thou haſt no need of my goods. True, *Non eget quoad potentiam ſuam* (as *Salvian* ſpeaks r) God in reſpect of his power, of his Majeſty, hath no need. But then his Goſpel hath, his Church hath, your poor diſtreſſed brethren, yea the brethren of Chriſt have ſ. O ſteep your thoughts in the remembrance of Gods dignations; embrace this Seaſon for the contrivance of ſome charitable benefaction. Let neither Mirth nor Fulneſſe cauſe you to forget your God, nor indiſpoſe you in the leaſt for the adminiſtration of ſuch a Service, as may not only ſupply the neceſſity of your brethren, but be abundant alſo (in the iſſue) by many thanſgivings unto God t.

r *Ad Eccleſiam Cath. lib. 4.*

ſ Mat. 25. 40.

To concluſe in few words (for it might ſavour of ſome jealouſie to over-charge an Ingenuous Auditory) If ye place any moment in the glory of your Maker, any weight in the credit of your Profeſſion, any ſtrength in the honour of your Country, Let theſe aſſociate and accord you in your endeavours to doe worthily in *Ephratah*, to be famous in *Bethlehem* u. And let us all be exhorted (of whatſoever denomination) to walk in wiſedom with a holy vigilancie and circumſpection, redeeming the time by yielding our fruit in our Seaſon. So ſhall we receive in due ſeaſon the fruit of our fruits, the end of our faith, even the ſalvation of our ſouls.

t 2 Cor. 9. 12.

u Ruth 4. 11.

FINIS.